“Meaning of the Phrase ‘All Found.’” V. 4. Mar. 14, 2024.

What do the words “all found” refer to in the sentence “Good pay, ten shillings a day and all found.”?

The phrase "all found" in the context of employment, especially from historical or traditional settings, refers to a situation where, in addition to receiving wages, the worker is also provided with all necessary living accommodations. These accommodations typically include lodging, food, and sometimes even clothing or other essentials, without any additional cost to the employee. The term is often used in the context of jobs that require the employee to live on the premises or nearby, such as in domestic service, maritime occupations, or remote work locations like mining camps or military expeditions.

When we dissect the sentence "Good pay, ten shillings a day and all found," it communicates that the job offer includes not only a daily wage of ten shillings, which by the standards of the time would have been considered good pay, but also that the employer would provide all the basic necessities required for living. This would be particularly appealing in eras or situations where securing lodging and food could be a significant portion of one's expenses, effectively making the wage portion of the compensation more valuable since it wouldn't have to be spent on these essentials.

Historically, "all found" arrangements were more common at times when workers would be stationed far from their homes or in places where suitable accommodation and food were not readily available or were prohibitively expensive. It also reflected a paternalistic approach by employers, who took on the responsibility for the welfare of their employees, at least to some extent, by ensuring they had what they needed to live while employed.

In maritime contexts, for example, "all found" would mean that sailors were provided with meals, a place to sleep, and possibly uniforms or protective clothing, as part of their employment contract. This made long voyages or periods away from home financially easier to manage, as they wouldn't need to pay for these essentials out of their wages.

The value of an "all found" arrangement would vary depending on the quality and quantity of the provisions supplied by the employer, and in some cases, could be a significant portion of the overall compensation package. It also implied a degree of care and investment in the well-being of the workforce, suggesting that the employer aimed to ensure that workers were not only paid but also well-cared for, which could be an incentive for recruitment and retention in competitive or challenging labor markets.

Today, while the exact terminology "all found" might be less commonly used, the concept persists in various forms, such as jobs that include housing or meals, or in modern corporate contexts, perks like free lunches, gym memberships, or company accommodation. These benefits continue to be a way for employers to attract and retain talent, by offering a comprehensive package that goes beyond simple monetary compensation.